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Forest Service
Southern Region

Arkansas-Oklahoma

Fiscal Year 1996

General Report to the Public

Ouachita and Ozark-St. Francis National Forests

Scenic streams lace the landscape of the National Forests

Message from the Forest Supervisors

A letter to our friends:

We are pleased to share with you a copy of our General Report to the Public for 1996. This report reflects the issues and accomplishments of all three national forests in Arkansas and Oklahoma -- the Ouachita and the Ozark-St. Francis.

At year's end, it is traditional to pause for a moment and look back to where we have been and what has been accomplished.

A major focus this past year has been to enhance our customer service initiatives and develop additional partnerships with groups and individuals. Many of you have been a vital part of these activities. Without your dedication and commitment to a variety of projects, much of the work would not have been accomplished. We appreciate your assistance and contribution in helping us manage the natural resources of these great public lands.

The past few years have brought important changes in the way we manage and protect the valuable natural resources of the national forests. The practice of forestry continues to reflect a more comprehensive view that includes ecological soundness, economic vitality, and social responsibility.

As we review the accomplishments, and look forward to the future, we find that the mission of the Forest Service is still intact -- that of "Caring for the Land and Serving People". Our commitment to this mission is unwavering.

Thank you for your continued interest in and support of the national forests. We welcome and appreciate your input regarding future management of these public lands.

Sincerely,

Alan G. Newman
Forest Supervisor
Ouachita National Forest

Lynn C. Neff
Forest Supervisor
Ozark-St. Francis National Forest

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General Report to the Public
Ouachita and Ozark-St. Francis National Forests

Your National Forests, Many Things to Many People

As resource managers of the national forests in Arkansas and Oklahoma, we know how important communication is. This report is our way of keeping you apprised of management activities and accomplishments made on the Ouachita National Forest in west-central Arkansas and southeastern Oklahoma, and the Ozark-St. Francis National Forests in northwestern and eastern Arkansas. Totaling over 2.9 million acres, they represent 3 of the 157 national forests administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. The forests offer outstanding recreation opportunities and provide wildlife habitat and high-quality water resources as well as timber, minerals, and other values.

Headquarters for the Ouachita and Ozark-St. Francis National Forests are in Hot Springs and Russellville, Arkansas, respectively. Two forest supervisors direct the management and protection of this land through 19 district offices and 2 Civilian Conservation Job Corps Centers. We encourage you to visit or call these offices if you have any questions or suggestions concerning the national forests in Arkansas and Oklahoma. Working in cooperation with groups and individuals interested in the management of the national forests continues to be one of our priorities, and we greatly appreciate your interest, work, and cooperation in these endeavors. We continue to challenge ourselves, and you, to help us choose the right direction for forest management — one that will retain the national forests' tremendous assets for generations to come.

Except as noted for the Job Corps Program, which runs from January through December, activities in this report pertain to fiscal year 1996: October 1, 1995 to September 30, 1996.

Ecosystem Management: The Forests in 1996

The Forest Service's mission is caring for the land and serving people. We do this by sustaining ecosystem health, contributing to communities, and providing for sustainable human use. We call the effort to blend and integrate a variety of values and uses "ecosystem management." Forest programs in fire, timber, cultural heritage, wildlife, planning, lands, minerals, and recreation all contribute to ecosystem management. Important efforts in ecosystem planning, scientific research, and innovative public involvement are underway on the national forests.

During 1996, the Ouachita National Forest completed a Forest Plan amendment that established a new management area for shortleaf pine-bluestem ecosystems and red-cockaded woodpecker recovery. Developed with active public participation, this amendment provides for older, more open forests with rich grass and wildflower layers on much of the land west of Waldron, Arkansas north of Blackfork Mountain, and south of Poteau Mountain. Restoration of the shortleaf pine-bluestem ecosystem is now underway. The Poteau Ranger District continued to offer tours of the proposed shortleaf pine-bluestem management area groups and individuals. Efforts to protect, augment, and monitor the current population of red-cockaded woodpeckers on the Poteau, Cold Springs, and Mena Ranger Districts continued, with modestly successful results.

By annually monitoring the accomplishments of the forest plan, another amendment was completed on the Ouachita National Forest during the year, addressing the need for more early successional habitat. This amendment allows Forest Plan standards originally written to be applied to larger areas, including watersheds.

Most ranger districts have begun conducting inventories and planning operations at the scale of small watersheds, and all are carrying out ecosystem analysis as part of their normal planning program. Several districts continued to experiment with large-scale prescribed burns. Ranger Districts remain heavily involved in cooperative research programs directed by the Southern Research Station.

The 52 stands in Phase II Ecosystem Management Research were monitored for multi-resource in this, the third growing season following the reproduction harvests carried out 3 years ago. Located across the Ouachitas, these 40-acre stands, 44 of which were partially harvested in mid-1993, represent one of the most ambitious and thorough ecological studies ever undertaken in the South. Initial postharvest findings will be presented in late 1998.

Cooperative studies of bird, amphibian, and reptile populations and vegetation patterns were initiated in the Phase III research watersheds. The hydrology group began collecting baseline measurements of streams. Three of the research watersheds lie near the headwaters of the Saline River; the fourth is just east of Lake Ouachita.

Two social science research projects associated with Phase III were completed. In one, the Forest Service staff convened 34 focus groups to explore more cooperative

approaches for decision making on the forest. Other on-site visits with forest users yielded findings about public attitudes toward the Ouachita National Forest. Final reports are due in early 1997.

The Ecosystem Management Advisory Committee met in March, May, and September. Members provided reviews of the analysis of the South Rich Mountain ecosystem in the Mena Ranger District, concerns about prescribed burning, and plans for the Ozark/Ouachita Highlands Assessment.

Ecosystem management remains a high priority on the Ozark-St. Francis National Forests. Multi-resources monitoring of the 4 stands in Phase II Ecosystem Management Research were conducted in this, the third growing season following reproduction harvests carried out 3 years ago. The 4 stands that were partially harvested in mid-1993 are 53-acre stands.

The Ozark/Ouachita Highlands Assessment

In the spring of 1996, the forest supervisors of the Ouachita, Ozark-St. Francis, and Mark Twain National Forests initiated the Ozark/Ouachita Highlands Assessment. The assessment will gather information so that the land and resource management plans of these national forests can be revised by the year 2001. This information will help define the management approach for the forests and to identify needs for change in the respective management plans.

Serving as the steering committee, the three forest supervisors and an assistant director of the Southern Research Station agreed to work together on the assessment. They will work to reduce redundancy, improve consistency, and jointly collect and interpret data needed by the three forests; address trends that are truly regional in nature (including trends in timber and recreation demand, wildlife populations, water quality, and development of roads); and build partnerships and public trust.

Since mid-1996, all potentially interested State and Federal agencies have been invited to join the effort. Responses from other agencies during 1996 were positive and are expected to increase in 1997. The intent of the forest supervisors and assessment team leaders is to encourage all agencies, organizations, and individuals with an interest in the future of the national forests, particularly the Ozark St. Francis and Ouachita National Forests, to participate in revising the three forest plans.

The draft public involvement plan developed and distributed late in fiscal year 1996 emphasized public input and involvement. Though it was generally well received, reviewers pointed out ways that the plan could be substantially improved. Citizens were invited to participate in the full assessment team meeting held in Springfield, Missouri, in late August. The public has also participated in subsequent working meetings of the terrestrial, social-cultural-economic, and aquatic-atmospheric teams.

Assessment reports and databases will be released in early 1998. The reports will describe the social, economic, and environmental setting in which these three highlands national forests exist, including key trends that may affect the forests and other public lands. These reports will not offer land management decisions of any kind.

Recreation

The national forests offer a wide variety of outdoor recreation opportunities. In 1996, upgrading of facilities and a focus on improving customer service continued. The forests participated in a customer service survey begun by the Chief of the Forest Service to evaluate visitor satisfaction. In fact, the Ozark-St. Francis and the Ouachita ranked first and second among *all* of the national forests in the number of response cards returned and received awards for doing so. Using various techniques to determine recreation use and needs at developed recreation areas, trails, wild and scenic rivers, and wilderness areas, information is constantly gathered that helps us respond to the needs of the public, and provides valuable information for planning.

On the Ouachita National Forest, more funds were directed to reverse the growing backlog of heavy maintenance needs at developed recreation areas. As a result, a bathhouse was improved and upgraded at Shady Lake Recreation Area, a new water well was drilled and a chlorinator was installed at Crystal Recreation Area. Work continues on new restroom facilities at Rocky Shoals Float Camp. Other improvements include installing a new gate with a hydraulic lift system at Shady Lake dam, renovating the Loop B bathhouse and the camping spurs at Lake Sylvia Recreation Area, landscaping at Loop C in the Charlton Recreation Area, and road surfacing at the Jack Creek Recreation Area.

Construction projects in the Winding Stair Mountain National Recreation Area (NRA) in Oklahoma included repairing the Cedar Lake Recreation Area sewage treatment plant, completing the Shady Lane camping loop renovations and interior road paving, and repaving the Oklahoma portion of the Talimena Scenic Byway and its vistas. In addition, a contract was awarded to renovate the North Shore bathhouse at Cedar Lake, and plans are underway to improve the Cedar Lake South Shore Campground Loop, Winding Stair Campground, and Pipe Springs Picnic Area.

Miscellaneous projects on the NRA included repairing a picnic shelter at Cedar Lake, installing an information/interpretive sign at Horsethief Springs Picnic Area, and reconstructing the water collection field for the spring at Pipe Springs. The Cedar Lake Equestrian Camp bathhouse showers were modified to make them accessible, playground equipment at Cedar Lake was purchased for people physically challenged and interpretive sign bases installed along the Talimena Scenic Byway. In addition, our visual enhancement projects along the Talimena Scenic Byway and the Scenic 7 Byway were continued.

In 1996, volunteer groups, including the Sierra Club and the Student Conservation Association, through Challenge Cost

Share Agreements, again made significant improvements to the trail and wilderness areas on the Ouachita National Forest.

On the Ozark-St. Francis National Forests, Moccasin Gap Horse Trail on the Bayou Ranger District was connected to the local rural water system and now has electricity. New restroom facilities were installed and water is now more accessible for riders and their horses.

The Sorghum Hollow Horse Camp was completed at the Huckleberry Horse Trail, located on the Magazine Ranger District. The camp, built in cooperation with volunteers and district personnel, is equipped with restroom facilities, a pond for watering horses, and 15 camping units complete with tether posts and fire rings.

The Mill Creek Multiuse Trailhead was completed on the Boston Mountain Ranger District, complete with parking areas, an unloading ramp, an information board, and renovated restroom facilities. The Mill Creek Trail was the first trail system on the forest especially dedicated to off-highway vehicles, which include all-terrain and four-wheel-drive vehicles, mountain bikes, and endurance motorcycles.

New restroom facilities were installed at the trailhead of Pedestal Rocks Special Geologic Area. The Pedestal Rocks and Kings Bluff Trails use the same trailhead.

A group-use area was established at the Blanchard Springs Campground on the Sylamore Ranger District and can accommodate up to 30 campers and picnickers, making it ideal for families and other groups.

The bath house at Long Pool Recreation Area, on the Bayou Ranger District, is now complete. As soon as the rural water system is complete, the bath house will offer hot showers and flush toilets.

On the Ozark-St. Francis National Forests, the staff established a new Pilot Fee Program at recreation sites. With this new program, the forest will be able to retain a larger portion of the fees collected during the upcoming recreation season. National Forest fees have not been raised since 1990. The fees will be slightly higher in 1997, making them more comparable to prices charged by other recreation providers.

A Heritage Reserve

The National Forests contain a wealth of information about the lives and cultures of the people who were stewards of this land before us. Over the last few years, the Ouachita's staff of heritage resource technicians (HRT's) and archeologists have located and documented over 5,652 sites of historic or prehistoric settlements and activities and resulted in investigations on more than 331,765 acres of forest land.

In fiscal year 1996, Ouachita National Forest archeological staff and HRT's surveyed a large tract of land involved in a land exchange with Weyerhaeuser Company. During this survey, they documented more than 85 newly found archeological sites. In addition, the Forest Service reached an agreement with Weyerhaeuser, the Oklahoma Archeological Survey, the Arkansas and Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Offices, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the Caddo Tribe, and the Choctaw Nation on methods for the protection and evaluation of those important resources.

At the end of the fiscal year, excavations began at the Rocky Shoals Float Camp to document and further evaluate a prehistoric site and historic farmstead located prior to improvements at the recreation area. These excavations made use of the experience of a vast cadre of amateur archeologists, without whom this project would have been much less successful. The prehistoric occupation consisted of a food-processing station, possibly 5,000 to 7,000 years old; the historic farmstead was a very short-term endeavor and dates back to 1850-60. These excavations provided valuable information about how these people and what forest conditions were like prior to settlement.

In 1996, the Heritage Resource Program on the Ozark-St. Francis National Forests completed two Challenge-Cost Share projects with the Arkansas Archeological Survey. As a result, two studies were published: "Farms in the Forests", a study of late historic domestic sites on the Ozark and Ouachita National Forests in Arkansas; and "From Surveyor's Chains to Satellites", which examines historic environmental change and land use on the Lee Creek Unit of the Ozark National Forest. The studies are basically confined to Crawford and Washington Counties, Arkansas. Copies are available for interested individuals.

In addition, 20,384 acres received heritage resource inventory on the Ozark-St. Francis National Forests. A total of 166 sites were recorded. Over the last six years a total of 149,346 acres received Heritage Resource coverage and a total of 1,380 sites were recorded.

The forest archeologists also used a new photographic technique to record the petroglyphs at the Narrows on the Boston Mountain Ranger District.

Wildlife Habitat for Diverse Species

More than 560 species of fish and wildlife on Ouachita, Ozark and St. Francis National Forests require diverse habitats. These range from mature forests for some to early successional habitats for others. Some management practices emulate habitat-changing factors created by natural catastrophes such as wildfires, droughts, tornadoes, and insect and disease epidemics.

In 1996, to provide and maintain habitat diversity, Ouachita National Forest personnel built 113 wildlife ponds, placed 366 nest boxes, undertook prescribed burns on more than 20,000 acres, and improved food and cover on 24,504 acres. Numerous partners and volunteers include the National Wild Turkey Federation, Quail Unlimited, the Garland County and Hot Springs Village Chapters of the

Audubon Society, the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation, and the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission.

Determining the status and habitat requirements of wildlife is always an important part of forest management. District biologists conducted surveys on deer, bears, turkeys, quail, bats, amphibians, reptiles, and resident and neotropical migratory birds. Data on bats and on the Western diamondback and timber rattlesnakes were gathered to determine their specific habitat requirements. In addition, over 300 permanent plots were established to monitor forest land birds.

Cooperative studies by several universities have helped to gather data on the importance of fire to the forest ecosystem, the habitat requirements of the southern flying squirrel, and the use of early successional stages of forests by breeding and migratory birds.

In addition to habitat improvement, wildlife professionals have used their expertise in gathering data for the Arkansas Breeding Bird Atlas, worked with the Partners In Flight program for the recovery of neotropical migratory birds, and conducted surveys for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Breeding Bird Survey. Other important tasks of the biologists have been giving talks, preparing news releases, and producing audio and video pieces. They contributed various wildlife articles to 308 newspapers, and have presented a bat program numerous times on the educational television channel ESPN2, which is broadcast to 30.8 million cable subscribers.

In 1996, Forest Service personnel worked to improve the habitat on more than 770 acres on the Ozark-St. Francis National Forests. In particular, efforts to restore popular game animals were highly successful. Deer and bear populations continued to increase, and turkey numbers remain near record high levels.

Partners and volunteers that provided assistance to the Ozark-St. Francis National Forests include: Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission, Tennessee Tech University, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Arkansas Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation, Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, Arkansas State University, several Chapters of Quail Unlimited, Henry Robison, University of Arkansas, and Arkansas Tech University.

Managing Endangered, Threatened, and Sensitive Species

Every species on the national forests is important to the total system; however, some species are doing better than others. The Ouachita National Forest has over 100 species of plants and animals that warrant special consideration. Management efforts are continuing to **P**rotect and recover **E**ndangered, **T**hreatened, and **S**ensitive species (PETS). This effort is to prevent sensitive species from becoming threatened or endangered and to increase populations and distributions of endangered and threatened species to the point that they no longer need special protection.

An intensive recovery effort centers around the red-cockaded woodpecker on the Ouachita National Forest. A wildlife biologist on the Poteau Ranger District is recognized for his dedication and innovation in the recovery efforts for this species. Activities have included monitoring, trapping, and banding birds and augmenting bird populations by moving juvenile birds to the Ouachita National Forest from other forests. Seventeen birds were transferred and, of the 11 active groups on the Ouachita, 10 made nesting attempts. Both active groups on the Crossett Experimental Forest nested. Their habitat was improved by prescribed burning, reducing the midstory, placing 15 restrictor plates and 40 predator guards on cavity trees, adding cavity inserts, and removing flying squirrels from monitored cavities.

Bald eagles nested again on Lake Ouachita, producing one eaglet.

Forest Service Personnel continue surveys for the endangered American burying beetle, the Fourche, Caddo and Rich Mountain salamanders, as well as the endangered Indiana bats.

There are 10 Federally listed species that exist on the Ozark-St. Francis National Forests. Six of the federally listed species are endangered and four are in the threatened category.

On the Ozark-St. Francis, Forest Service personnel conducted annual surveys for Indiana, Gray, and Ozark big-eared bats. Surveys for Indiana and Gray bats are done in cooperation with Tennessee Tech University. These surveys help biologists determine population trends for these species, both of which are doing well. The surveys for Ozark big-eared bats are done with assistance from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. This bat is difficult to locate versus the Indiana or the Gray, because they roost in small crevices in boulders or in small caves. Some exciting work on bats began in 1996, with the assistance of researchers from Tennessee Tech and Arkansas State Universities. The researchers are using very small mesh nets to catch bats as they forage in the forest. The information they obtain will help determine preferred forage habitat .

Fisheries Program

Though funding was well below early 1990's levels, fiscal year 1996 saw an increase in funds for the fisheries/aquatic program on the three National Forests.

Forest Service personnel on the Ouachita National Forest constructed and placed 47 devices to attract fish in forest lakes and ponds, added 5 gravel fish-spawning beds, and constructed a 2-acre fishing pond. They fertilized 24 ponds and 2 lakes to increase fish production and to manage nuisance, rooted, aquatic vegetation. A section of shoreline around Camp Clearfork Lake was deepened to reduce weedbed problems, and the dredge material was placed along the shore above the water to reduce muddy areas. In addition, several cubic yards of pea gravel were placed in the area to serve as fish actors/spawning areas.

Approximately 176 acres of lakes and ponds were stocked through efforts in cooperation with the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation, the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Forest Service personnel worked closely with the Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Fourche La Fave Watershed District, improving about 30 acres of the 85-acre lakebed of the Cedar Lake Watershed Project in southern Perry County. This watershed lake is under construction. While the lakebed was still dry, parts of the young pine plantation in the area to be flooded were cut, creating boating lanes, open sections of shoreline, and many fish-attracting edges.

The Ouachita National Forest began a new initiative aimed at restoring fish passage at stream crossings. Waterfalls had developed at the downstream edges of these crossings, blocking fish from moving upstream some or all of the time. Seven crossings were modified using large rocks as ramps so the fish can climb waterfalls. This work has sustained major flows of high water without damage. A number of new replacement or repaired crossings also have been modified to facilitate the passage of fish.

Forest Service personnel continue to restock fish at Cedar Lake on the Choctaw Ranger District in Oklahoma using bluegill, red-ear sunfish, and fingerling channel catfish, as well as the Florida strain of largemouth bass. Bass will be stocked through 1998 to ensure their success. A 14-inch minimum length limit and a daily limit of six bass went into effect January 1, 1997, in all lakes and ponds in the Ouachita National Forest in Oklahoma, and fishing was restricted to rod and reel use only. These limits were a cooperative effort between the Ouachita National Forest and the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation to improve fishing in national forest lakes and ponds, bringing them into the same management strategy as State fishing lakes in Oklahoma.

During National Fishing Week, several fishing derbies were sponsored. Approximately 4,800 children and adults participated in these events, sponsored by the Ozark-St. Francis National Forests, Ouachita National Forest, the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation, Magic Baits Company, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Hooked on Fishing International, and local organizations, merchants, and individuals.

The Ouachita National Forest participated with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in the annual survey of the leopard darter. Heavy rains made for poor snorkeling conditions; therefore, counts of leopard darters were down. Mussel surveys were continued, and a Challenge-Cost Share Agreement signed with a cooperator in each State. The Ouachita National Forest signed a new agreement with Southern Arkansas University for a 2 year study and survey of the crayfish of the Ouachita.

The Ozark-St. Francis National Forests received 48% less funding in fisheries for 1996. In spite of this drastic decrease, district biologists and partners were able to make significant improvements in the fisheries resources on the forest. Over 43 acres of lakes were improved with the placement of fish structure and fertilization programs. Fish structures are typically constructed out of brush and trees, tied securely together and anchored with weights to sink them. The purpose of these structures is to provide cover for small fish to hide from larger predators and serve as a home for countless insects that small fish use for food.

Over 1,300 acres of Ozark-St. Francis National Forests lakes were sampled during 1996 to determine fish population balance. Arkansas Tech University and the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission are especially helpful partners in this area of fisheries management.

Typical sampling of lakes and ponds includes shoreline seining to check on bass and bluegill reproduction, spring or fall electrofishing to check fish numbers, sizes and weights, and periodic gill netting to assess populations of species like catfish or hybrid striped bass. Sampling results provide management recommendations to help improve fishing opportunities for anglers.

There is good news for the anglers on the St. Francis National Forest. Sampling conducted on Storm Creek and Bear Creek Lakes continues to show excellent populations of largemouth bass, bluegill and catfish in both lakes. A 13-16 inch limit on largemouth bass was implemented on Bear Creek Lake to increase the number of larger bass. The hybrid striped bass in Storm Creek Lake also continues to do well. Sampling efforts revealed fish in excess of 10 pounds, and in excellent shape. Storm Creek Lake received a stocking of grass carp in 1996 to help control the abundant coontail in that lake. This vegetation will be monitored through the year.

In addition to the work on sampling and improving existing ponds and lakes, the Ozark-St. Francis National Forests created additional fishing opportunities in 1996. Ten acres of small ponds were constructed to benefit wildlife and fish. Most of these new ponds are small, usually averaging 1/2 acre with bass over five pounds.

Another large part of the fisheries program on the Ozark-St. Francis is the monitoring of the streams. Over 25 miles of streams were sampled during 1996 to determine the types and numbers of fish species present. Sampling is typically conducted using backpack electrofishing units to stun the fish. The fish are then collected with dip nets and placed in holding buckets. After sampling, these fish are identified, counted and released into the streams. The majority of fish species collected in forest streams are small minnows and darters that require very clean, clear water to survive. This is an indication of very good water quality.

Research on smallmouth bass continued through 1996. University of Arkansas researchers are sampling smallmouth bass populations on several forest streams to estimate production and population sizes. Preliminary results show good

numbers of the "tiger bass," but their growth rates appear to be slow. We are anxiously waiting the final results of this study.

Botany and Range Management

On the Ouachita National Forest, Forest Service staff discovered a new location for the federally listed endangered plant *Ptlimnium nodosum* (harperella). The Forest Service purchased 50 acres of known harperella habitat and added them to the Ouachita National Forest land base. The staff set up permanent study plots in harperella habitat, as part of a Challenge-Cost Share project with the Arkansas Heritage Commission to study population movements and habitat requirements and to identify associated plant species.

The Mena Ranger District continued its study of the effects of timber salvage logging on *Iris verna,* a plant species of concern in the Ouachita National Forest. On the Womble Ranger District, Fulton Branch Glade was the focus of a year-long Challenge-Cost Share project with the Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission and members of the Native Plant Society of Arkansas. The glade is the site of the only known population of *Eriocaulon kornikianum* (hatpin) on the Ouachita National Forest. The inventory and clean-up of the site has been completed.

A Challenge-Cost Share project with The Nature Conservancy's Oklahoma Field Office resulted in the inventory of plant and butterfly species on a limestone glade that is home to *Leavenworthia aurea* (golden glade cress), a sensitive plant species.

On the Caddo Ranger District, data was collected from temporary plots set up to determine changes in vegetation in a mountaintop glade as it undergoes restoration by prescribed burning and hand removal of the encroaching vegetation.

Several districts held wildflower walks in the spring and summer of 1996. Over 100 people joined district personnel and Forest Service botanists on the hikes.

Use of the Ouachita National Forest as a range for cattle continue to decline due in part to the reduction in available forage when the forest stopped using clearcuts as a management tool and also due to a decline in interest by younger ranchers.

Currently on the Ozark-St. Francis National Forests, there are 40 permittees grazing approximately 1,500 head of cattle on available allotments.

Ensuring Pure, Clean Water, Productive Soils, and Clean Air

Protection of the water, soil, and air resources is a basic requirement for Forest Service land managers. The future of the forests is linked to the health of our watersheds, including healthy rivers, lakes, and streams, productive soils, and clean air. Protection of these resources is achieved through sound interdisciplinary planning, careful project design and implementation for management activities. Protection is further ensured by monitoring the effects of land management activities.

In carrying out management programs, the Forest Service staff in Arkansas and Oklahoma is committed to using sound practices in all management areas and to maintain or improve water quality. To improve these best management practices (BMP's), specialists monitor soil, water, and air to determine BMP effectiveness.

During the summer of 1996, Ouachita National Forest personnel resurveyed seven watersheds using Basin Area Stream Surveys (BASS). These surveys help determine the cumulative effects of BMP's. Forest Service personnel also tested water quality in swimming areas and monitored herbicides for offsite movement.

On the Ouachita National Forest, 20 timber units were monitored for soil compaction. The results indicate that some changes may be needed in yarding equipment operations on more compaction-sensitive soils. Follow-up work is currently in progress. The staff also began to monitor the effects of prescribed fire and silvicultural treatment activities on the chemical and physical conditions of the soil in areas being converted to pine/bluestem ecosystems. Follow-up monitoring will continue for many years. Initial analysis has indicated no adverse long-term effects to soil productivity. An initial report will be completed in 1997.

The main emphasis of the air management program is to ensure that all burning is prescribed and monitored. Ozone levels are monitored for general trends in air pollution because, even at a relatively low concentration, ozone can damage vegetation. With the Arkansas Department of Pollution Control and Ecology, air resource management personnel continue to operate 2 ozone-monitoring stations. These stations, located at Oden and Deer, provide representative ozone concentrations in the national forests as well as the two Class I wilderness areas, Caney Creek and the Upper Buffalo.

Visibility during burning remains a primary concern and is monitored by a fully instrumented IMPROVE site at Deer, the only such site in Arkansas. **I**nteragency **M**onitoring of **PRO**tected **V**isual **E**nvironments is a national program initiated by the Federal Environmental Protection Agency. The equipment automatically collects three samples of fine particles and one sample of breathable particles twice a week. Each sample is analyzed for particle concentration, optical absorption, chemical composition, and amounts of sulfate, nitrate, organic carbon, and elemental carbon. A nephlometer at the site also measures the light-scattering properties of the local air.

On the Ozark-St. Francis National Forests personnel monitored water chemistry at long-term baseline and wilderness stations to determine whether water quality changed over time across the national forests in watersheds with different management intensities. Analysis of the trends for these sites are available to the public.

Occasionally, Forest Service staff must respond to unusual and unpredictable effects on water quality. In March 1996, for example, a pork fat tanker truck spilled its load into a tributary of the Illinois Bayou in Hector, Arkansas on the Ozark National Forest. The trucking insurance company did an admirable job of cleaning and removing about 70 percent of the spill. The Bayou Ranger District also played an integral part in the clean-up effort. District personnel responded to the emergency and provided interagency coordination to organize the timing and location of the clean-up to ensure the protection of all resources. Personnel monitored soil and vegetation to ascertain the effects of being coated with fat. They monitored the water quality above the spill and at several points downstream with different concentrations of fat. Successive monitoring of dissolved oxygen and the demand for biological oxygen showed no long-term effects from the spill. The environmental factors of cold water, low flow, and small channel size aided in the clean-up effort. The trucking company's quick response and the coordinated efforts of forest service employees ensured the minimal amount of contamination from this potential environmental hazard.

In April, a tornado swept through western Arkansas leveling 5,435 acres of the Ozark National Forest on the Boston Mountain Ranger District. While trees in the stream may enhance habitat for fisheries, some trees may create problems by increasing streambank erosion. The forest hydrologist and the soil scientist identified trees whose removal would not harm stream banks. Special prescriptions were followed for removing timber in channels and riparian areas. These prescriptions protected fish habitat, channel integrity, and water quality.

Forest Service personnel also monitored three harvested timber stands on the Ozark-St. Francis National Forests to determine that the national forest standards and guidelines were being followed and were effective in protecting soil productivity.

The condition of 25 acres located within various watersheds was identified for improvement by controlling erosion, obliterating old roads, and stabilizing streambanks.

Rural Community Assistance (RCA) — "People Helping People"

Many people depend heavily on forest resources. The management of forest resources has a human aspect, which includes communities and jobs. Rural Community Assistance is a way to integrate the management of natural resources with the economic needs of local communities. Developed by the Forest Service and the Southern Group of State Foresters, in partnership with other Federal and State agencies, RCA programs help communities develop their own economies through natural resource enhancement.

The Ouachita and Ozark-St. Francis National Forests provided funding for six projects in Arkansas and Oklahoma during the past year:

- The Ouachita Mountain Resource Conservation and Development office in McAlester, Oklahoma, received $5,000 to plan and host a 2-day conference and equipment exposition to benefit forest industry throughout Oklahoma and the surrounding area.

- The city of Murfreesboro, Arkansas, received $2,000 for tourism development in southern Pike County.

- DeQueen/Sevier County received $5,000 to plan and host a leadership program, "Developing Participatory Community Leaders and Strategic Plan for Sevier County, Arkansas."

- The Little Dixie Community Action Agency, Inc., in Hugo, Oklahoma, received $10,000 to compile the "History of Choctaw County, Oklahoma" into an informative, educational, and entertaining document that will increase heritage tourism in the area.

- The North Logan County Chamber of Commerce, located in Paris, Arkansas, received $8,000 to establish a public information center for the county. The Chamber will also provide a community newsletter, a cable community bulletin board, local access to the Internet, and develop a community web page.

- Winrock International, located on Petit Jean Mountain near Morrilton, Arkansas, received $10,000 to assist in designing and publishing a products catalog for manufactures of small-to medium-sized secondary wood products.

Through a partnership with the State Foresters' offices in Arkansas and Oklahoma, several communities received funding and technical assistance through the Natural Resource Conservation Education Program and the Urban and Community Forestry Assistance Program. These programs are designed to encourage successful, innovative instruction in conservation.

Trees for Tomorrow

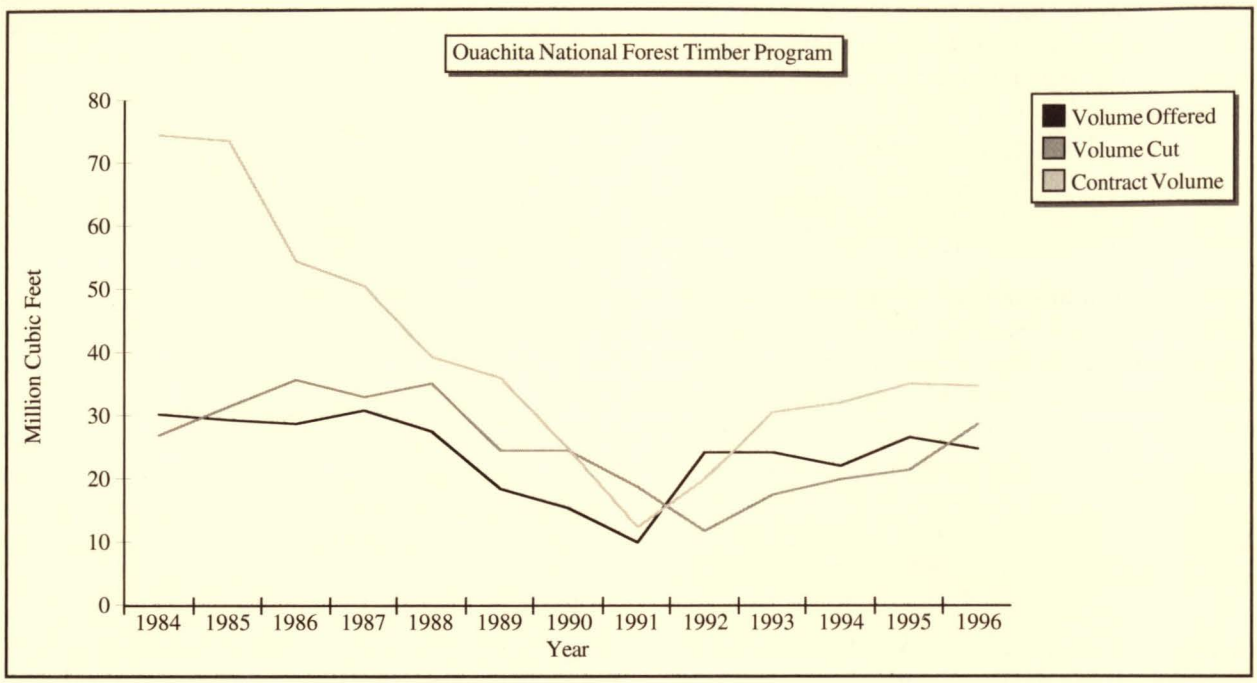
Both the Ouachita and the Ozark-St. Francis National Forests are made up of a mix of pine and hardwood trees. The timber harvest on the national forests helps to satisfy the demand for raw materials on which many local businesses rely.

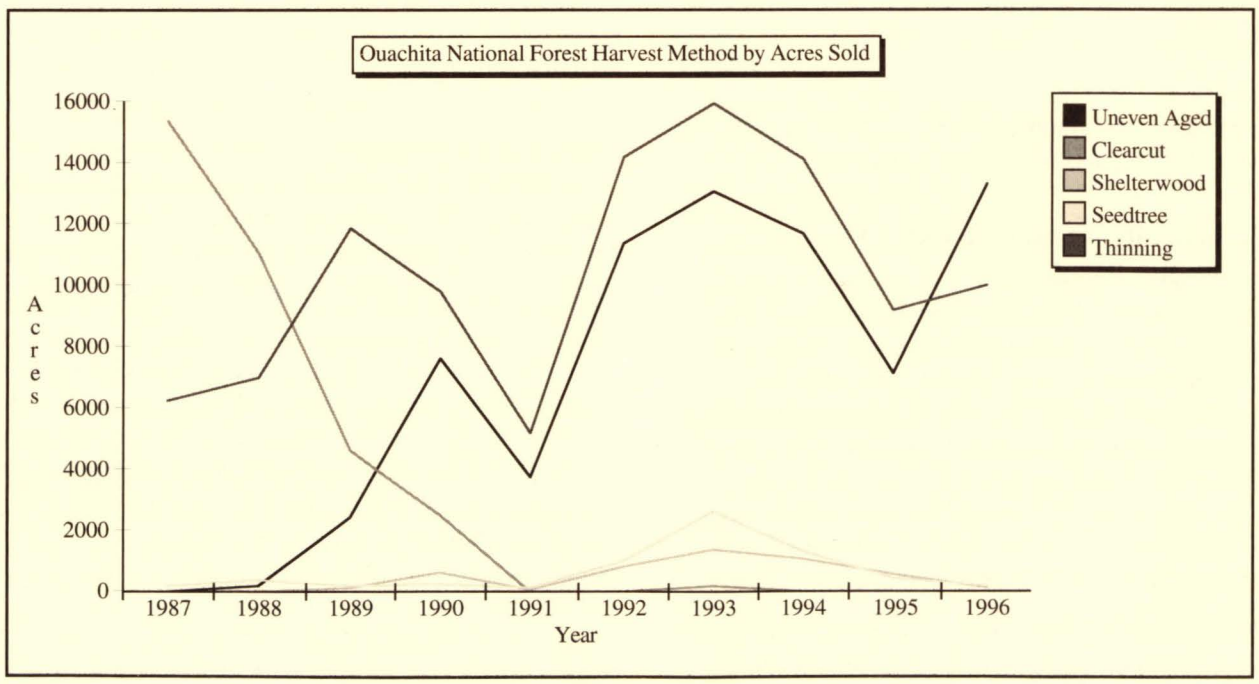
In the Forest Plans, about 65 percent of the Ozark-St. Francis National Forest's land and 61 percent of the Ouachita National Forest's land have been classified as suitable for timber production at a variety of intensities. Seventy percent of the Ouachita National Forest is classified as predominantly pine, with hardwood stands not being managed for timber production. The Ouachita, Ozark and St. Francis National Forests remain committed to a steady flow of resource and timber products to local communities and, in 1996, met required timber sale programs, well within cost-efficiency guidelines.

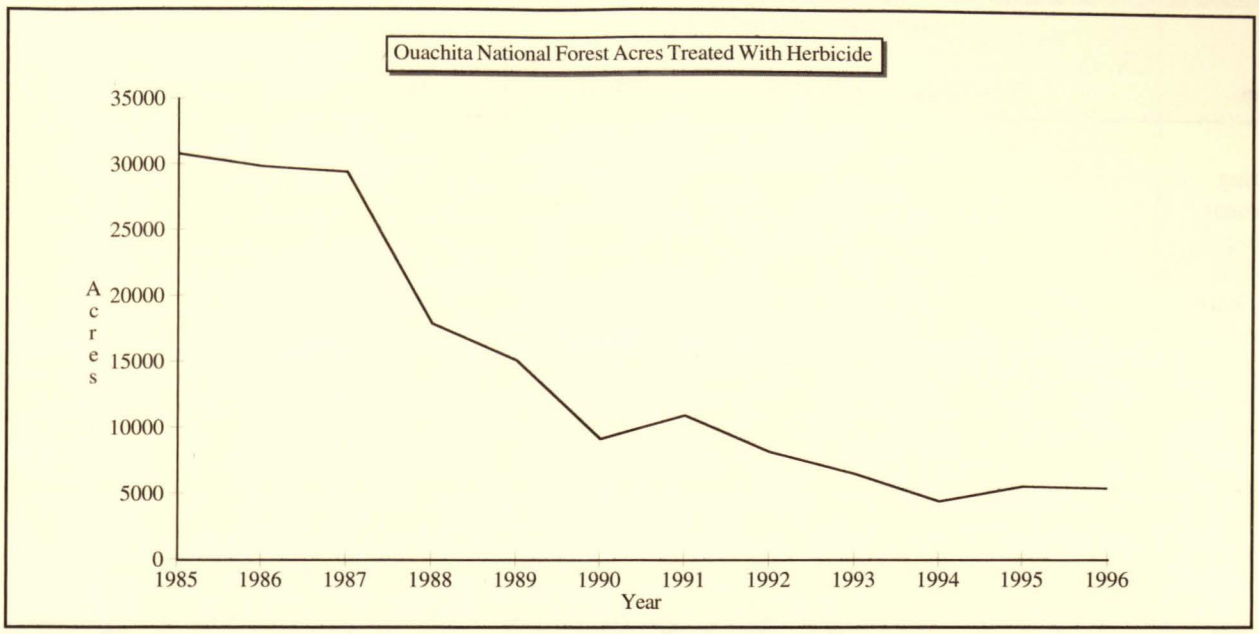
The Ouachita National Forest saw another year of an epidemic of southern pine beetle infestations, necessitating heavy salvage logging to control the spread of the insects. The Forest Service sold 31.4 million board feet of infested timber in 1996, as opposed to 42.5 million board feet the previous year. The evidence in late 1996 suggests the infestation will be significantly reduced across the forest throughout 1997.

Typically, the Ozark-St. Francis National Forests have not had to implement salvage sales. However, the tornado that hit the forest on April 19, 1996, had a tremendous impact on the forest, the adjacent landowners, and Forest Service employees. A total of 68 employees worked approximately 21 days each clearing roads, assessing storm damage, and completing all of the necessary environmental studies and physical labor needed to process the salvage sales before the downed timber became unusable.

In addition to the 10,180.9 thousand cubic feet offered in 1996, the Ozark-St. Francis National Forests produced 19.3 million board feet or 3,508 thousand cubic feet of salvage volume as a result of the tornado damage to more than 5,000 acres on the Boston Mountain and Pleasant Hill Ranger Districts.







Fire Management

For both the Ozark-St. Francis and the Ouachita National Forests, 1996 was an active fire year. In addition to a significant increase in fires throughout Arkansas and Oklahoma due to a very dry spring, Forest Service personnel were called upon numerous times to assist fire cooperators in Oklahoma and Texas. The drought that had plagued west Texas for several seasons had moved into western Oklahoma in mid-1995, and by early spring of 1996, areas in both Texas and Oklahoma were becoming a disaster for farmers, ranchers, and land and resource protection agencies. The requests for assistance became numerous as the season progressed, particularly in Oklahoma.

By summer, many Western States were experiencing dangerous and damaging fires, and local resources were mobilized to assist with these emergencies. During the height of the Western States emergency, the 3 national forests, along with fire cooperators from the Oklahoma Forestry Services, the Arkansas Forestry Commission, the National Park Service, the Fish and Wildlife Service, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and Native American tribes in eastern Oklahoma, mobilized over 400 firefighters to help fight the western fires.

The Ouachita National Forest's prescribed burning program reached an all-time high in the number of acres burned. During 1996, Forest Service personnel performed prescribed burns on over 55,000 acres, primarily for fuel reduction, silviculture, and wildlife habitat improvement. Normally, only about 30,000 acres are prescribed burned. The large increase in acreage was made possible by expanding the size of the areas burned. Additional use of roads and natural barriers for firelines, along with the practice of burning for several objectives within the same burning unit, enabled the prescribed fire personnel to burn larger areas.

The Ozark-St. Francis National Forests also successfully conducted prescribed burns on 4,863 acres in hardwood stands for fuel reduction. This work is important because of the sensitivity of hardwoods to fire damage and the need to reduce fuels within these stands.

As 1996 came to a close, a change was instituted to manage the Ozark-St. Francis and the Ouachita National Forests' fire programs with one management team. This move is designed to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of both programs by operating from one set of management objectives and by reducing duplication of work. The fire management offices in both Russellville and Hot Springs, Arkansas, will remain open. Program responsibilities within those offices may shift as the merger materializes; however, cooperation with other fire agencies will not be adversely affected.

Fires on the Ouachita and the Ozark-St. Francis National Forests, by Cause						
	Ouachita National Forest			Ozark-St. Francis National Forest		
		Acres			Acres	
Cause	No. Fires	Forest Service	Private	No. Fires	Forest Service	Private
Lightning	18	146	0	4	25	3
Equipment	4	19	8	2	81	172
Smoking	2	2	100	2	5	0
Campfire	3	40	10	4	100	21
Debris burning	23	55	174	18	42	666
Railroad	4	6	0	0	0	0
Arson	97	630	1,450	58	391	469
Miscellaneous	12	14	113	12	263	243
TOTAL	163	912	1,855	100	907	1,574

Prescribed Fires on the Ouachita and the Ozark-St. Francis National Forests, by Management Objective				
	Ouachita National Forest		Ozark-St. Francis National Forest	
Management Objective	Acres Burned	% of Total	Acres Burned	% of Total
Wildlife habitat improvement	24,910	45.00	302	6.00
Fuel reduction	27,783	49.00	4,208	86.00
Site preparation	3,632	6.00	353	8.00
Control of undesirable species	45	.00	N/A	N/A
TOTAL	56,370	100.00	4,863	100.00

Reaching Out to People

The development and wise use of human resources is a valuable part of the Forest Service mission. The national forests in Arkansas and Oklahoma administer and host the Volunteer, the Senior Community Service Employment, and the Job Corps Programs. These programs contribute work in a variety of activities, as shown in the following tables on the next page.

Value of Work Performed by Forest Service Volunteers

National Forest	Year	No. of Volunteers	Appraised Value of Work
Ouachita	1990	1,341	$242,109
	1991	1,227	256,491
	1992	1,698	246,312
	1993	1,245	292,563
	1994	1,053	330,727
	1995	1,770	346,847
	1996	706	339,676
Ozark-St. Francis	1993	600	100,800
	1994	532	204,759
	1995	159	88,425
	1996	22	32,010

Value of Work Performed by Personnel in the Job Corps Program

National Forest	ProgramYear (1/1 - 12/31)	No. of Enrollees	Appraised Value of Work
Ouachita	1991	304	$1,344,660
	1992	370	894,300
	1993	312	385,958
	1994	419	303,070
	1995	348	310,882
Ozark-St. Francis	1991	624	510,600
	1992	543	486,243
	1993	554	802,000
	1994	481	900,000
	1995	377	772,466

Value of Work Performed by Enrollees in the Senior Community Service Employment Program

National Forest	ProgramYear (7/1 - 6/30)	No. of Enrollees	Appraised Value of Work
Ouachita	89-90	101	$611,334
	90-91	97	647,150
	91-92	111	678,145
	92-93	106	707,159
	93-94	98	721,392
	94-95	109	704,865
Ozark-St. Francis	92-93	81	491,000
	93-94	56	491,666
	94-95	49	523,807

Administering Land Ownership, Special Uses, and Minerals

The mineral program on the Ozark-St. Francis National Forests generated over $550,000 in revenue from royalties and annual lease payments for oil and gas leases. Several producing natural gas wells were drilled in Franklin and Johnson Counties. Over nine miles of natural gas pipeline was approved for construction to connect new producing wells to existing pipelines.

There are four applications for new drill sites approved in Franklin County. Each drill project requires about 1 acre of land. After drilling is completed, the site will be restored to a natural contour. Grass and trees will be planted to prevent erosion and provide benefits to wildlife species. Most pipelines which carry natural gas from a producing well to an existing pipeline system, are constructed parallel to a road or in the ditchline of a road.

The lands program on the Ouachita National Forest continues to provide services in real estate, including the purchase and exchange of land with willing land owners to consolidate ownership patterns and improve the efficiency of land management. In 1996, Congress and the public debated a proposed land exchange between Weyerhaeuser Company and the USDA Forest Service, Ouachita National Forest. At a congressional hearing held in Hot Springs, Arkansas, in February, witnesses for both sides were able to testify. After the hearing, the bill authorizing the exchange was made part of a much larger package of legislation concerning parks and public lands projects. The 104th Congress passed the bill, and the President signed it on November 11, 1996.

In the land exchange, the United States received 180,586 acres of land in Arkansas and Oklahoma for 47,486 acres of public land. The exact amounts will be reported in fiscal year 1997. The land exchange will provide public access to and use of a large area around Broken Bow Lake and the Glover River in Oklahoma. It will also make available more land around Lake Ouachita, the North Fork of the Ouachita River, and the Little Missouri River in Arkansas. These lands have significant wildlife, watershed, and recreation values, and provide renewable resources to the people of the United States.

The electronic age has had an effect on the Ouachita National Forest. Cellular telephone companies are requesting antennas or towers at approved communication sites, since some people want to be able to use these telephones as they travel along the highways through the national forest.

The Forest Service continues to make minerals available for personal and commercial interests. In fiscal year 1996, the value of common-variety minerals was reassessed based on private sector fees. The reassessment resulted in an increase in the price the Forest Service charges for aggregate at $0.25 per ton and for building stone at $4 per ton. The Ouachita National Forest minerals program generated over $287,000 in mineral revenue to the Federal government from 239 oil and gas leases, 80 common-variety aggregate and building stone contracts, 50 quartz contracts, and 3 hard-rock leases.

On the Ouachita National Forest, partial reclamation is ongoing at several active mines. Reclamation was completed at three mines in 1996. The Forest Service requires that mines be fully reclaimed by the operators when mining is complete. All mines are reclaimed as open food plots for wildlife and/or ponds. A Forest Service-designated, free-use, quartz mineral-collecting and rockhounding site for the public, begun in 1995, was completed on the Winona Ranger District. This is the second such public quartz-collecting site the Ouachita National Forest has developed.

Other activities on the Ouachita National Forests are summarized in the following three figures.

Land Acquired by the Ouachita National Forest

Year	Acres
1991	721
1992	24,915
1993	7,230
1994	1,354
1995	1,700
1996	1,141

Fees Collected by the Minerals Program for Extraction of Quartz

Year	Amount Collected
1991	$31,400
1992	25,930
1993	25,480
1994	31,655
1995	21,665
1996	41,275

Fees Collected for Special Use Permits

Year	Amount Collected
1991	$61,927
1992	66,356
1993	71,343
1994	117,253
1995	145,170
1996	125,428

TABLE 1.—Resource Accomplishments Compared with Amended Forest Plan Projections: Ouachita National Forest
(A comparison of planned versus actual outputs)

Activity	Unit of Measurement	Amended Plan Annual Projection	FY96
RECREATION			
Developed recreation capacity	PAOT days	1,907,000	**1,857,070**
Dispersed recreation capacity	PAOT days	2,823,000	**2,823,000**
Camp/picnic area administration	Acres	****	**35**
Wilderness area administration	Acres	63,254	**65,974**
Trail construction	Miles	38	**5**
Trail maintenance	Miles	(337)	**213**
Heritage resource survey	Acres	(13,043)	**24,250**
Heritage resource evaluations	Properties	****	**523**
WILDLIFE AND FISH			
Waterhole development	Structures	220	**113**
Nest box replacement	Structures	220	**366**
SUBTOTAL: WILDLIFE HABITAT IMPROVEMENT	**Structures**	**440**	**479**
Midstory reduction	Acres	1,350	**2,286**
Wildlife stand improvement overstory/mast development	Acres	1,500	**1,004**
Prescribed burning	Acres	24,000*	**20,969**
Seeding and planting	Acres	550	**134**
Permanent opening construction	Acres	35	**32**
Temporary opening construction	Acres	630	**79**
Wildlife opening rehabilitation	Acres	14	**0**
SUBTOTAL: WILDLIFE HABITAT IMPROVEMENT, NON-STRUCTURE	**Acres**	**28,079**	**24,504**
TOTAL: WILDLIFE HABITAT IMPROVEMENT AND MAINTENANCE	**Acres**	**250**	**48**
Lake fish attractors	Structures	104	**47**
Stream structures	Structures	100	**21**
Ponds/lakes constructed	Pond/Lake	1	**1**
TOTAL: FISH IMPROVEMENT STRUCTURE	**Structures**	**205**	**69**
TOTAL: FISH IMPROVEMENT NONSTRUCTURE	**Acres**	**560**	**317**
(Lime fertilization of lakes/ponds, and/or fish stocking)			
Red-cockaded woodpecker augmentations	Birds	****	**17**
Red-cockaded woodpecker artificial cavities	Cavities	****	**20****
Red-cockaded woodpecker cavity restrictors	Structures	38	**15**
Red-cockaded woodpecker predator guards	Structures	20	**40**
Cave/mine gate construction	Structures	2	**1**
TOTAL: T&E IMPROVEMENT: STRUCTURE	**Structures**	**60**	**76**
Red-cockaded woodpecker midstory reduction	Acres	3,000[1]	**553**
Red-cockaded woodpecker prescribed burn	Acres	22,000[1]	**3,388**
TOTAL: T&E HABITAT IMPROVEMENT: NONSTRUCTURE	**Acres**	**3,000**	**3,941**
RANGE			
Number of permittees	Number	****	**43**
Number of head months	HM's	****	**4,488**
Number of animal unit months	AUM's	****	**5,709**
Number of head livestock	Number	****	**854**
Range forage improvement	Acres	****	**575**
Number of active allotments	Allotments	****	**27**
TIMBER MANAGEMENT			
Timber resource inventory	Acres	(140,000)	**139,617**
Timber offered	MMCF	30	**25**
Harvest method, by acres sold			
Clearcut	Acres	0	**0**
Seedtree	Acres	2,760[2]	**756**

(continued)

TABLE 1 *(continued)*

Activity	Unit of Measurement	Amended Plan Annual Projection	FY96
Removal	Acres	****	**107**
Shelterwood	Acres	3,485[2]	**1,057**
Uneven-aged management****	Acres	23,562[2]	**9,033**
Thinning	Acres	21,313*	**12,474**
Salvage	Acres	****	**1,517**
Timber harvested	MMCF	(30)	**29**
Firewood sold	Cords	****	**566**
Reforestation	Acres	22,980	**12,898**
Timber stand improvement	Acres	22,980	**4,999**
SOIL/WATER/AIR			
Air visibility monitoring	Sites	****	**0[3]**
Ozone monitoring station	Sites	****	**1**
Ozone damage survey	Sites	****	**0[4]**
Soil inventory	Acres	(24,870)	**56,000**
Basin Area Stream Survey (BASS): Water resource inventory	Acres	(4,324)	**40,000**
Herbicide monitoring (water)	Sites	****	**7**
Baseline water quality	Sites	3	**9**
Swim water monitoring	Sites	****	**14**
Watershed improvement construction	Acres	(56)	**94**
Watershed improvement maintenance	Acres	(8)	**23**
Arkansas Water Education Team school partnerships	Schools	****	**6**
MINERALS AND GEOLOGY			
Minerals administration	Cases	640	**490**
LANDS			
Landline maintenance	Miles	400	**42**
Landline location	Miles	120	**1**
Land purchase	Acres	200	**433**
Land exchange	Acres	1,200	**708**
Rights-of-way	Cases	12	**2**
FACILITIES			
Roads reconstructed	Miles	15	**21**
Local roads constructed	Miles	46	**13**
Local roads reconstructed	Miles	15	**19**
PROTECTION			
Fuel treatment acres	Acres	12,000	**27,783**

**** These activities and outputs are not specifically listed in the Forest Plan. Estimates of the values are not readily available since they depend on conditions and needs determined during the year in which they occur.

* Based on Amendment #22

** Artificial cavity inserts are installed with restrictor plates.

( ) Numbers in parentheses are not specifically listed in the Forest Plan. They are estimates of projected activities and outputs based on Plan direction.

1 Based on changes in Amendment #22 Appendix G-5. These includes, dormant and growing-season burns for the decade.

2 Based on changes in Amendment #15

3 The visibility camera station was discontinued in favor of operating a regional visibility station IMPROVE site at Deer, Arkansas. (IMPROVE = Interagency Monitoring of Protected Visual Environments.) The camera station was discontinued on September 30, 1995.

4 No ozone damage survey done in FY96 due to limited funds allocated to State and Private Forestry and Forest Health Monitoring.

MMCF = million cubic feet T&E = Threatened and endangered PAOT = People at one time

TABLE 2.—Resource Accomplishments Compared with Forest Plan Projections for the 10-year Period: Ozark-St. Francis National Forests

Activity	Unit of Measurement	10 Year Plan Projections	FY96	% Plan
RECREATION				
Use administration	PAOT days	na	1.3MM	—
Trail				
Construction/reconstruction	Miles	88	12	147
Maintenance	Miles	na	65	—
Cultural resource				
Inventory	Acres	120,000	20,384	134
Evaluation	Sites	na	26	—
Wilderness administration	PAOT days	1.336MM	133,600	90
WILDLIFE AND FISH				
Prescribed burning	Acres	8,000	302	234
Wildlife opening maintenance	Acres	na	120	84
Food plot maintenance	Acres	240	282	812
Wildlife opening development	Acres	na	49	369
Food plot development	Acres	60	15	1,878
Wildlife stand improvement	Acres	na	0	31
Seeding and planting	Acres	na	57	1,059
Pond construction	Structures	320	24	118
Fish cover development	Structures	100	17	322
Pond fertilization	Acres	200	33	72
RANGE				
Prescribed burning	Acres	20,000	10	6
Bush hogging	Acres	20,000	800	13
Fertilizing	Acres	10,000	800	23
Seeding	Acres	10,000	0	2
Fencing	Miles	70	0	10
Pond construction	Structures	100	2	18
Corral construction	Structures	20	0	5
TIMBER*				
Timber volume offered	MBF	600,000	56,000	90
Timber volume sold	MBF	600,000	49,700	84
Reforestation				
Hardwood	Acres	20,600	1,246	85
Pine	Acres	29,000	1,967	91
Timber stand improvements				
Hardwood	Acres	16,800	949	81
Pine	Acres	68,000	1,096	35
Even-aged management cutting (acres sold)				
Pine clearcutting	Acres	16,100	52	54
Hardwood clearcutting	Acres	11,000	2	80
Pine seedtree	Acres	8,200	966	82
Pine shelterwood	Acres	3,600	281	24
Hardwood shelterwood	Acres	4,000	166	73
Uneven-aged management cutting (acres sold)				
Pine thinning	Acres	51,000	3,756	72
Hardwood thinning	Acres	13,000	321	104
Hardwood group select	Acres	42,000	1,044	29
Pine selection	Acres	18,000	441	38
Examination and prescription	Acres	1.1MM	93,857	70
FUEL TREATMENT				
Prescribed burning	Acres	50,000	4,208	60
SOIL AND WATER				
Watershed improvements	Acres	250	25	168

(continued)

TABLE 2 *(continued)*

Activity	Unit of Measurement	10 year Plan Projections	FY96	% Plan
Watershed maintenance	Acres	1,280	59	60
Soil and water inventory	Acres	na	10,000	—
ROAD WORK				
Reconstruction/construction	Miles	785	40	68
LAND AND MINERALS				
Mineral leases	Leases	2,606	1,104	261
Land acquisition	Acres	4,320	0	433
Land exchange	Acres	8,000	160	38
Boundary location	Miles	1,000	7	50
Landline maintenance	Miles	2,000	109	93
Right of way acquisition	Number	na	22	—

*Plan Projections column for timber represents a weighted average of four years under the original Forest Plan and six years under the Amended Forest Plan. Some acreage figures from previous reports have been corrected

% Plan = Percent of Forest Plan accomplished to date
MBF = thousand board feet
PAOT = People at one time
na = not assigned

TABLE 3.—Expenditures and Receipts to the United States Treasury

Forest and activity	Expenditures	LMP Levels*	Receipts
Ouachita National Forest			
Recreation	$2,594,928	$6,823,854	$145,587
Wildlife and fish	1,860,958	3,239,202	N/A+
Timber	9,411,705	11,295,640	22,402,425
Lands	349,181	1,537,882	135,109
Range management	125,027	387,126	7,823
Soil, water, air	256,443	769,775	N/A
Minerals	213,896	396,517	288,000
Facility construction and maintenance	151,813	140,535	N/A
Road construction and maintenance	2,365,816	4,759,463	N/A
Ecosystems	1,163,943	353,935	N/A
Fire	1,684,307	1,308,280	N/A
Law enforcement	107,991	745,356	N/A
General administration	2,889,275	3,504,656	N/A
Total	**23,175,283**	**35,261,941**	**22,978,944**
Ozark-St. Francis National Forests			
Recreation	2,019,000	2,397,000	556,751
Wildlife and fish	674,000	423,000	N/A
Timber	3,691,000	3,840,000	3,764,090
Lands	579,000	330,000	56,842
Range management	8,000	49,000	30,997
Soil, water, air	457,000	161,000	N/A
Minerals	228,000	166,000	3,357
Engineering (facility & road construction & maintenance)	2,239,000	1,650,000	N/A
Ecosystems (includes planning)	1,452,000	827,000	N/A
Fire	1,087,000	968,000	N/A
Law enforcement	39,000	56,000	N/A
General administration	2,395,000	1,511,000	N/A
Total	**15,246,000**	**12,000,000**	**7,359,256**

* LMP = Land Management Plan. Funding is needed to fully implement the Forest Plan.

N/A+ = not applicable

Returns from the Forest Service to the States

The Ouachita and Ozark-St. Francis National Forests in Arkansas and Oklahoma returned over $6 million to the county school and road department budgets.

The Forest Service returns 25 percent of each year's total receipts to States in which forest lands are located. In turn, Federal law requires the States to distribute these funds to counties that contain national forest lands for road programs and schools. The amount of money returned to each county is based on the amount of national forest acreage within that county.

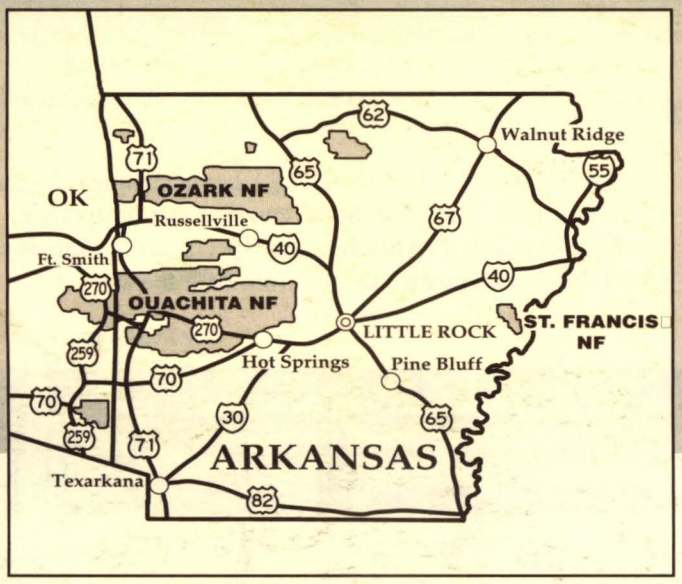
The 25 percent returns come mainly from timber receipts, recreation fees, oil and gas leases, and special use permit fees.

Table 4 shows Arkansas and Oklahoma counties and the amount each will receive. Some counties that have lands managed by both the Ouachita and the Ozark-St. Francis National Forests receive money from both forests.

TABLE 4.—The Amount of National Forest Lands in Arkansas and Oklahoma with the Amount of Money Each County in Each State Should Receive from the Ouachita and Ozark-St. Francis National Forests in 1996*

State and County	National Forest	Acres	Funds Received
Oklahoma			
LeFlore	Ouachita	212,541	$734,907
McCurtain	Ouachita	43,270	148,509
Total		**255,811**	**883,416**
Arkansas			
Ashley	Ouachita	1,675	5,770
Baxter	Ozark-St. Francis	62,990	99,774
Benton	Ozark-St. Francis	8,197	12,984
Conway	Ozark-St. Francis	6,954	11,015
Crawford	Ozark-St. Francis	86,184	136,512
Franklin	Ozark-St. Francis	103,962	164,672
Garland	Ouachita	114,632	394,931
Hot Spring	Ouachita	320	1,102
Howard	Ouachita	1,246	4,292
Johnson	Ozark-St. Francis	180,802	286,383
Lee	Ozark-St. Francis	11,653	21,503-
Logan	Ouachita and Ozark-St. Francis	86,264	171,222
Madison	Ozark-St. Francis	48,001	76,032
Marion	Ozark-St. Francis	3,360	5,322
Montgomery	Ouachita	334,014	1,151,050
Newton	Ozark-St. Francis	197,523	303,743
Perry	Ouachita	98,179	338,214
Phillips	Ozark-St. Francis	9,548	17,619
Pike	Ouachita	2,778	9,570
Polk	Ouachita	202,392	697,891
Pope	Ozark-St. Francis	191,762	303,743
Saline	Ouachita	53,703	185,000
Scott	Ouachita	363,926	1,253,673
Searcy	Ozark-St. Francis	31,326	49,619
Sebastian	Ouachita	14,888	51,287
Stone	Ozark-St. Francis	61,315	97,120
Van Buren	Ozark-St. Francis	32,256	51,092
Washington	Ozark-St. Francis	21,921	34,722
Yell	Ouachita and Ozark-St. Francis	221,743	703,399
Total		**2,553,514**	**6,596,250**

* Of the total receipts for the Ouachita National Forest ($5,691,983) returned to the counties, a total of $5,606,000 was generated from timber sales and the remainder from other resources such as fees for special-use permits, range use, and recreation use.



OUACHITA AND OZARK-ST. FRANCIS NATIONAL FORESTS

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